A SOCIOLOGIC PERSPECTIVE ON ADOLESCENCE

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The topic assigned to me is too broad to cover in the time allocated to it. Therefore I shall limit my paper to four major points. First, I will make a brief statement of my viewpoint toward adolescence. Second, I will present some elementary social science principles pertinent to the topic. Third, I will call your attention to some emotional and social problems associated with peer-group relations during the adolescent years. Fourth, I will point out some intergenerational problems that are critical in this phase of the life cycle.

A DEFINITION OF ADOLESCENCE

From the viewpoint of the sociologist, *adolescence is the period in the life of a person when the society in which he functions ceases to regard him (male or female) as a child and does not accord to him full adult status, roles and functions.* In terms of behavior, adolescence is defined by the social roles a young person is expected to play, is allowed to play, is forced to play, or prohibited from playing, because of his status in society. It is not marked by a specific point in physiologic development such as puberty, since its form, content, duration and period in the life cycle are differently determined by various cultures and societies. Sociologically, the important thing about the adolescent years is the way the maturing individual is regarded by his society. The menarche, development of the breasts and other secondary manifestations of physical adolescence in the female, and the less obvious physical changes in the male connected with sex maturation, such as rapid growth, voice changes, the appearance of labial, axillary, and pubic

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hair, derive their significance for the sociologist from the way they are regarded by the society in which the adolescent lives.

The phrase "adolescent behavior," as we use it, refers to the social action patterns of young people. We believe that adolescent behavior is a type of transitional behavior which is dependent, in part, upon the society, more particularly upon the position the individual occupies in the social structure and, in part, upon biopsychologic phenomena. This is not to assert that anatomic, physiologic and psychologic facts, connected with this phase of the life cycle, have less influence on behavior than the social system. The sociologist merely takes the position that their functional importance for the maturing individual is defined by the culture in which he lives.

Before proceeding further it may be well to state what the sociologist means by the terms "culture" and "social system." *Culture* is what human individuals as members of a society learn, share and transmit. Individuals in social situations are sharers, bearers and creators of culture. In this sense individuals and culture are inextricably interwoven into the matrix of a society's social system.

The concept of *social system* is more inclusive than that of culture. A social system is composed of the organized interactions which relate one individual to another, individuals to groups, individuals and groups to institutions, and institutions to other institutions. Organized relations which tie persons together are expressed in the social roles individuals perform in society. The web of social relations and the conjoint role activities of persons enables a society to maintain itself. A society is more than its constituent part—individuals, culture and social system.

THREE ELEMENTARY SOCIOLOGIC PRINCIPLES

Interrelations between persons, culture and social system may be described by calling attention to three elementary sociologic principles pertinent to this discussion. These principles may be stated categorically as follows: First, individuals learn how to behave socially by direct personal association with other individuals who have been enculturated in a social system. Second, the content of what individuals learn is provided by a particular society's culture. Third, the ways an individual participates in the social system determine, in large part, what is learned. I will discuss briefly each principle, in turn, and give an illustration of it.

The first principle, to repeat, states that *social behavior is learned by individuals in association with other members of their society.* The sociologist relies upon this principle to explain uniformities in the everyday behavior of persons. These may be illustrated by the use of

language; or by common understandings of how males, as well as females, should dress, talk, and act in specific roles.

The second principle emerges from the first. It states that *the content of what the individual learns is provided by his society's culture.* This principle may be illustrated by reference to the requirements every professional person has to meet before he can become a member of his profession. Physicians, for example, are licensed by the state in which they practice. Before they can be licensed as doctors they are required by law, as the instrumentality through which the society exerts its power over what physicians should be taught, to complete a stipulated curriculum. The rationale behind the licensing law is the idea that physicians should be trained in specific subjects that the society, working within the institution of organized medicine, considers indispensable for medical practitioners to have learned. Now, this is my point: what is learned, by physicians-to-be, is provided by the specialized culture of the society in which a medical student's training is taken. Students learn the required essentials to be licensed as medical doctors by participation in specialized aspects of the society's culture. Thus principles one and two are brought to bear simultaneously.

The third principle is implied in the second. It is also necessary, if we are to understand differences as well as uniformities in social behavior. This principle states that *what the individual learns is shaped by his participation in a social system.* The learning of a foreign language or algebra is a cogent illustration of this principle. To understand the learning process, as it is related to the development of social behavior, we must study an individual's participation in his society and discover the sociocultural influences that have been brought to bear on him throughout his life.

Reflection upon these three principles indicates that if we are to understand social behaviors in all their ramifications, we need to determine the consistencies and inconsistencies which exist in a particular social system. To do this the sociologist analyzes a society's culture and studies carefully the way an individual participates in the sociocultural matrix around him. This is particularly important, because it is through the participation process that individuals learn what they may, may not, can or cannot do within their society. What individuals learn by participating in some aspects of a society's culture may be prohibited by other aspects of it. Thus some rules that are designed to control the social behavior of persons and groups may be juxtaposed to other rules. In this sense, society provides the person with the essential elements of conflict.

Adolescents are particularly vulnerable to conflicts in the sociocultural matrix which surrounds them in our society. The adolescent is no longer a child, but he has not reached adult social, legal or economic

status. As a quasi-child, yet simultaneously a quasi-adult, he is faced with many dilemmas. He must act and react to adults, other adolescents, and to the many social situations in which he finds himself.

Adolescents, as well as adults, often find themselves in the position of an industrialist who made a fortune in recent years. To bolster his self-esteem he set out upon a lion hunt in East Africa. While hunting alone one afternoon, he flushed two lions at the same time. He took careful aim and killed the older lion before it had time to charge. The second one, a young male, charged. As the lion jumped, the hunter fired, but he missed. Fortunately for the hunter, the lion miscalculated; he had jumped too far. While the lion recovered, the hunter scrambled to safety. Back in camp, his companions told him, "Brother, you'd better practice your markmanship, or you're going to get killed!" For the next two weeks he practiced and became quite good with his rifle. Feeling ready to go back after his lion, he returned to the place where he had flushed the two lions. He looked around for the young lion, and, sure enough, up on a slight rise, there was the lion—practicing short jumps!

Like the hunter and the hunted, adults and adolescents often fail to see the other party's interest in the social situation in which they are involved. This, perhaps, is the crux of the often-discussed "adolescent problem." From the viewpoint of adolescents, the question is: "Why are adults so stupid?" From the viewpoint of adults: "Why do these young people do such crazy things?"

SOME EMOTIONAL PROBLEMS

Young persons can sympathize with the anguished cry of Sir Walter Raleigh, "Fain would I climb, but fear I would fall," for adolescence is a time of hope and fear, of dreams of success, and tortures of failure. Caught in crosscurrents of anticipation and insecurity, the adolescent searches for a solution to the dilemma of his developing emotional needs and the demands society makes upon him.

By mid-adolescence a young person is on the threshold of a predicament: He must withdraw from his parents in the interest of becoming an independent individual, but he must remain within the family and continue to receive its support. When this time comes, he shrinks from intruding on the feelings of his parents, and he rightly feels they must not pry into his inner life. Thus his deeper personal problems are seldom shared with his parents. Moreover, he receives little support because our society teaches us to hide our anxieties, especially our fears, for to fear is to be weak, and the weakling is not a hero. Adolescent worries do come out at home, but they are not necessarily the ones that bother adolescents—or their parents—most. Parents may hear anxiety expressed about their children not passing courses at school, or not making the team, or getting in the cast of a school play. It is socially acceptable to express these kinds of anxiety.

An adolescent's real anxieties are behind his back, and he may fear that they are going to grab him. They may take the form of a suspi-

cion that he is being snubbed by boys with whom he would like to associate. Although some worries of this kind creep into the lives of most teenagers, with others they become a real problem. For example, Tom believes his age mates are "leaving him out" of their clique activities. Tom is a shy lad of 16, who is worried sorely because his classmates have ignored him in recent months. When he entered high school, he was asked to join some group activities, but his fears and his family got in his way. He thought he had real reasons for not going to a school dance in his sophomore year, and not going skating with a mixed group on another occasion. The fact is Tom cannot dance, and his skating is poor. Today his classmates do not deliberately leave him out, or dislike him; they merely overlook him.

Tom's feelings of insecurity are traceable, in large part, to a family situation beyond his control. What makes his case so difficult is that his parents do not know his problem, or theirs. Tom is a victim of his mother's anxieties. She wants him to succeed, but she is making him fail.

How, you may ask? In the first place, Tom can never do anything well enough to suit his mother. In the second place, he must not "overexert" himself or he will "damage his heart." (His maternal grandfather died from a coronary at 47.) His mother gives him few chances to go places and to do things on his own. He goes with the family; actually, this means the mother, the father and his sisters.

Hidden anxieties such as Tom's are common among adolescents, but are seldom noticed by adults. This is unfortunate, for excessive shyness is just as troublesome to a child as the kinds of emotions that impel a boy or girl to do unreasonable things. Worry that one will not be able to make good, as well as the anxiety that comes from being unloved and misunderstood, can break out in stealing or lying, or generally ungovernable behavior. It's as if such an adolescent said, "All right! I'll show them I don't care!" The bravado acts that result bring the youth into conflict at home, at school or with the law.

THE PEER PROBLEM

Although many adolescents are full of anxieties about their personal appearance and their progress at school, their number *one* problem is to be accepted by their age mates. In the childhood years two or three friends often chum together, but, in adolescence, to be a member of a special set becomes extremely important. This is especially observable among girls; girls are more concerned with the details of social life, such as manners and clothes, than boys. However, whether an adolescent gets into the set to which he aspires is dictated by a good many things other than his own desire. The boy or girl has to dress according

to the group's standards; he or she has to do the things others do. This means that cliques form with close reference to the social and economic status of their members' families.

There is snobbishness involved in cliques; but the need to be safely inside protecting walls is so common at all ages that the adolescent can scarcely be blamed for wanting the backing of his peers. Younger children have the home to back them up. But the teenager, though not ready for complete independence, is often impatient of the kind of support his family gives. He needs to have the support of his intimates. His criterion of success is acceptance by his pals.

The heartaches among adolescents who long to be but are not accepted in cliques they admire and emulate are always touching and sometimes pitiful. To be included in a clique gives one a distinction not attached to most groups formed around school activities. To be a member of the band or the debating society often is less rewarding to an adolescent than to be singled out as socially acceptable by being included in a particular clique or "bunch." There are cliques of varying degrees of prestige, and to be accepted in a second- or third-best set is better than to stand alone on the outside. Failure to be accepted in a definite group may have long-lasting effects on personality; it may undermine an adolescent's estimate of himself as a person.

A clique may be crystalized into a self-perpetuating fraternity, sorority or secret society. Socially, membership in a high school fraternity or sorority proves to the school world that a boy or girl has enough prestige to be chosen by the organization; but the popularity of the chosen individuals may be short-lived. Nevertheless, to the teenager, who is so intent on feeling secure in the world of his age mates, the thing that has most meaning is membership in a particular group.

The anxiety adolescents express in social situations is related closely to family background. Many parents are not aware that what a teenager selects out of his social environment as meaningful to him depends in large part on what his upbringing has been. The values he has learned in his family permeate his feelings, and his values, in turn, enter into whom he seeks as companions. When a family has a wholesome social life of many kinds, the adolescent does not think he has to dust off his company manners for visitors. When friends of all ages have been in and out of a house frequently, there is little chance of teenagers developing social awkwardness. If an adolescent's home is one where he can take his problems, where he feels secure, he is less likely to fall into the unhappy situation of becoming friendless and isolated from his age mates. A home to be proud of does not mean to an adolescent broad lawns, large rooms and fine furniture, but a place where he feels comfortable in his surroundings and with his family, a place where he is glad to bring his friends.

A crucial question is: What happens when an adolescent feels cut off from the support and comfort of his age mates, as well as his family? The time is then ripe for him to act out his frustration in behavior that takes him still further from his goal, namely, to "be somebody" in his own right. A frustrated, rejected youth may join with others who also feel unwanted and find an outlet for troubled emotions in savagely delinquent acts. Or he may retire within himself, crushed, and cynically pretend that he does not care. To seek either refuge means that the maturation process is side-tracked. In our society, which delays so long the time when youths are accepted into adult society, it is important to recognize the adolescent's need for acceptance by others who are going through the same biologic, social and emotional phases of growth.

Before I turn from consideration of peer-group problems, during the adolescent years, I would like to point out that the social and emotional problems mentioned above are not as obvious to parents, to teachers or to adolescents as a Divinity School student's description of the neck line of Marilyn Monroe's blouse was to his fellow students. He reported it had a biblical cut: "low and behold." On the contrary, the interpersonal problems of adolescents are usually subtle; often they are hidden deep in the personality structures of the adolescent and of his parents.

INTERGENERATIONAL PROBLEMS IN ADOLESCENCE

This leads me to a discussion of adult-adolescent relations. Here the major problem revolves around the need of the adolescent, in our society, to gain independence from parental domination. Many parents do not recognize this problem, for they do not want their teen-age children to make decisions. Thus they cannot support the child's desire to become an independent person, secure in his own right. Many parents do not realize that when their emotional needs run counter to those of a child, trouble is going to result for both. Nevertheless an adolescent requires guidance in his efforts to reach self-reliant adult status in his own eyes and in the eyes of his peers. Parents are in the best position in our social system to furnish such guidance.

The crux of adult status is to play adult occupational roles, and to have a mate. There is wide variation in our society in the age when a young person may fulfill these roles. On the whole, the lower the socioeconomic level of the parents, the earlier in life these roles are filled with social approval.

Although the need for parental approval in the occupational area is strong in both boys and girls, the form it takes varies with the different roles our society expects of the two sexes. Girls need their mothers' assistance to help them understand the roles they are expected to play as adults. Mothers who have gained some understanding of the plight

many women find themselves in today, when women's occupational responsibilities are no longer clearly defined, can do a great deal toward helping their daughters not to mistake career glamour for happiness, and a house for a home.

Sometimes girls protest the unfair advantages men have over women in our society. This may be a cover-up for failure to see satisfactions in the feminine role they are expected to play. If an older girl carries her hankering to be a boy to the extent of insisting on boys' types of clothing and contempt for the kinds of adornment most girls like, her behavior can work mischief with the normal adjustment to the opposite sex that should come during adolescence. In such a case it is worth inquiring into why her feelings about becoming a woman have gone astray. Perhaps her mother is unhappy because of a poor marriage relationship, is overburdened with child bearing, or has turned into a despairing family drudge. Even though her mother may not express her feelings, observation of any one of these situations is enough to turn a girl against a similar future. It may be that her father wanted a son and has tried to make her into an acceptable substitute. In order to live up to his desire for comradeship with her, she may have tried to please him to such an extent that she has cast aside many of her normal interests.

Boys, too, have problems fitting into their traditional roles as males. Not only do they want to achieve great things, but also they early become aware that much is expected of them. Some worry a good deal over how they are going to "make good." The more secure a boy is in his relationship with his father, the readier he is to accept the responsibility of manhood. In the absence of a father, or of an understanding father, teen-age boys have a great need of other men they can admire. Teachers, counselors, the men for whom they work, heroes they read about, all exert more influence on them than they realize. A normal adolescent boy looks to a hero figure he admires.

When the interests of a boy, rather than his looks or his build, are responsible for deviations in his behavior from what is commonly expected of boys in a particular status group, tensions may be severe. If his interests include activities that are thought of as on the feminine side, a boy may be considered a "sissy." For example, Francis, who turned his radio on Saturday afternoons to the Metropolitan Opera, lived in dread of his friends finding out. In some circles this would have been considered cultural, but in the neighborhood where Francis lived interest in grand opera was jeered by the boys. This boy has learned to appreciate grand opera. He has been exposed to it on records and the radio since he was a small boy. His mother gave up a dream of an operatic career to marry. Francis may be said to be the product of a fond mother's hope for a son with musical tastes. Thus a problem may be building up for Francis and his mother, a problem that began before Francis was born.

HETEROSEXUAL RELATIONS

The development of wholesome attitudes toward heterosexual relations during the teen-age years is crucial to the maturation of both young women and young men. Before adolescence, the really strong and deep love relationship is to parents. If relations between parent and child have satisfied the child's emotional needs, the adolescent is in a good position to make the transition to a love relationship with the opposite sex.

A girl and a boy love their father and their mother in different ways, responding to the things in them that are characteristic of men and women. Most children have a closer relationship with their mothers than with their fathers. This first strong attachment to someone of their own sex may be one explanation for the inability of some women to break away from this one-sex love to the heterosexual love involved in marriage. It may be related, also, to the fact that large numbers of women who do marry want to live near their mothers and depend on them, almost more than they do on their husbands.

The boy's dependence on his mother in infancy means that he starts out by having a close attachment to someone of the opposite sex. This may be a help to him when he reaches the time to make a transition to an interest in girls. But it may also be a hindrance, especially if his mother has, without knowing it, taken advantage of the affection he feels for her and encouraged him to hold so fast to her that he finds it hard to let go.

There is a period between a boy's early childhood and adolescence when his father is of great importance to him. In order to establish the manliness that a boy seeks, he turns to his father as his object of admiration and gains immeasurably if his father is able to give him strong backing. The maleness of his father's interests offers him a chance to get free of the constant and overpowering association with women which characterizes our society. To digress for a moment, have you ever stopped to count the hours that boys spend in close companionship with, or under the supervision of, their mothers and women teachers, from infancy through adolescence, compared to the smaller number of hours usually spent with their fathers and other men? During these years, mothers and teachers tend to harp repeatedly upon such things as neatness, cleanliness, manners and other matters distasteful to small boys. Perhaps this explains some of men's hostility toward women observable in adult life in American society.

The exaggerated disdain of boys for girls, often spoken about as though it were a definite characteristic of the preadolescent period, may be a protective device, grown out of our way of life, to strengthen boys' solidarity and he-manness. At the same time it may serve as a protest against a home and school environment shaped by feminine tastes.

But to return to my theme. Girls, likewise, need to have close relationships with their fathers. While they are building an image of the man they would like to marry—and girls in their teens begin to measure the boys they meet against an ideal mate—they are depending greatly on the father or father-figure in their lives, such as an uncle, to fill in that picture.

Girls are likely to be, in one sense, their father's favorites. There need be no jealousy in a man toward his daughters, but often there is a fairly sizable amount of it in relationships between fathers and sons. But there may be a pitfall in this fondness of fathers for daughters. In his unconscious anxiety over a young man taking her away from him, a father may ridicule the boys she dates. This can make her more critical of men than is healthy.

The adolescent generally approaches heterosexual maturity by indirection. A concomitant of this is that many girls project their romantic yearnings on men they see, but never meet. The passionate and mass devotion of bobby-soxers to a current movie star or TV crooner is an expression of this aspect of teen-age feminine love life. This is an age when almost any male figure, if personable enough, whether a clerk in the neighborhood drugstore, a tenor in the church choir, or a high-school teacher, may be the object of romantic devotion. In Elmtown a pudgy girl, whom the boys ignored around the high school, exerted herself every evening for months to reach the bus early enough to get the seat behind the driver. She tried to talk to him, but with little success, and so discharged her feelings by gazing at the back of his bald head.

Boys, of course, go through the same phase. Although they may be less whole-souled in their preoccupation with romantic love than girls, their talk among themselves is as much of girls as of sports. But, "girl-crazy" as most boys are, at one time or another, they share their love for their "dream girl" with their occupational dreams. Love and marriage are not the be-all and end-all to boys that they are to most girls at this stage of heterosexual development. A young man has two passions: sex and success. I suspect the former is stronger in the adolescent years, but our society emphasizes the latter.

The impulses arising in connection with sex are managed usually according to the patterns of social behavior that have been built into a boy or girl in previous years. By the process of interpersonal participation in social life each learns the attitudes of the groups with which he associates. If an adolescent's associations in the home, his play groups and at school have taught him the values that helped him handle other strong emotions, the chances are that he will be able to cope with his sexual desires in a socially acceptable way. Adolescents who get into trouble with sex are likely to be so unhappy and insecure that they seek

the reassurance of being needed physically by someone, or their behavior is a blundering attempt to make up for frustration in other areas of life. An adolescent does not observe in vain the affectional behavior of his parents, and others with whom he has been in close association. If he has seen his father and mother deferring to each other's wishes, and sometimes sacrificing their own wishes in favor of others' desires, then it is likely that he will think of these ways as proper and will follow them in his relations with others.

CONCLUSION

In closing, I want to emphasize that the emotional problems of the maturing boy or girl are worked out, for the most part, on the proving ground of the teen-age years. Unfortunately, parents cannot, in the present state of our knowledge, prevent or wholly do away with the psychic wounds left by experiences their children pass through. But they can be enormously helpful if they provide the best social climate they know how, and give an example of facing up to life. The family, if it has done its job well, has prepared the adolescent for intimacy with others. Parents who see their boys' and girls' personalities showing the warmth and spontaneity that help to ensure their finding friends may expect them eventually to form lasting love relationships. These parents do not need to be anxious about the problems of adolescence.

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DISCUSSION

DR. PSATHAS. I would like to extend, if I may, some of the remarks made by Dr. Hollingshead. Since society has become so complex, much training is required to maintain the occupational specialization that we have. The period required for learning one's culture, therefore, is prolonged, and a longer time must be spent in a dependent state. American society has created considerable abundance, so that we can afford to keep the adolescent unproductive. We do not need him in the labor

force. In fact, there have been proposals to keep him out of the labor force even longer because there is just no room for him. We cannot absorb him. Concomitant with this is a decline in the proportion of positions in the labor force of unskilled and semiskilled occupations, and an increase in those occupations requiring more skills.

There is much free time, and unproductive time at that, during this period between childhood and full adulthood. In this period an absence of norms or a condition of anomia may exist; thus the adolescent does not know what is expected of him.

In a study of adolescents and their families which I conducted I found that lower-class parents seemed to be more permissive in their handling of the adolescent, relinquishing controls sooner than the middle-class parent does. The middle-class parents seemed to include the adolescent in family judgments and family decisions and train him for responsibility, I think, a little more adequately than the lower-class family does.

The absence of norms and of any explicit steps that are recognized by all parents and families in our society as to how the adolescent is to go through this transitional period complicates the problem for the individual considerably, especially since these unproductive years have been lengthening in their span.

The sex roles which Dr. Hollingshead referred to I think are quite important. These social roles that are associated with being a male or a female in our society are another source of strain or problem for the adolescent. We expect that a male will be competitive, striving, success-oriented, and more aggressive in his behavior than a female. Females are permitted to be more emotional than males, males more active physically, females more nurturant than males, and so forth.

What we refer to as sex roles differ; in other words, our behavioral expectations for males and females differ. The female may be at an advantage in our culture, in that the opportunities to learn her role are somewhat greater, since her mother is the major source for this.

The male, however, because his father leaves for work in the morning and comes home at night, has fewer opportunities to observe how males behave, particularly in the occupational sphere. The stress, then, is on competitive, striving kinds of activity or success for the male, while at the same time no avenues are open for him to achieve such success; that is, he cannot enter the adult world and achieve success in terms of occupation until later. In the meantime he is still confronted with the ideal, the dream, the success theme, and, in addition, he wants to assert his maleness. This may lead him into peer-group activity and may make such activity important for him. Therefore he may be expected to engage in activities sanctioned by his peers, activities which give him the status and the recognition that he wants. If he excels in

these activities, this is a kind of success. The activity may actually be delinquent, but the group supports him in this, and he achieves success in the sense of being recognized.

Professor Albert Cohen, a sociologist at Indiana University, in a major contribution to the sociology of adolescence and delinquency, has suggested in a book entitled *Delinquent Boys* that subcultural delinquency, that occurring in peer groups, may arise for different reasons in the middle and lower classes. The lower-class individual confronted with the success theme in our culture, desiring success, but at the same time finding that the avenues to success are closed or pretty restricted for him, may turn to destructive delinquent activities as a way of symbolizing his aggression against the middle-class value system of our society.

This is an interesting idea. He may engage in theft and destruction of property because these are the very things that middle-class individuals and groups in our society hold to be almost sacred. Acts of daring and exploitation may be a way of giving vent to his aggression against the middle-class system, whose values he accepts, but within which he is unable to achieve success.

On the other hand, the middle-class delinquent, Cohen suggests, may be reacting to the anxieties that develop in making a sex-role identification; that is, in asserting his maleness. The middle-class individual, by being exposed more to his mother than to his father—his father being away, out of the home, and so on—and having fewer opportunities to learn the male role, and having, therefore, more anxieties about whether he is a male or will be an adequate male, may engage in delinquent activities as a way of asserting his maleness, as a way of proving to himself, as well as to others, that he really is a boy, that he can be just as strong and aggressive and competitive as anyone else.

DR. LITTLE. I just want to ask a question. Not only does the male child find it difficult to know what adult male behavior is like if the father is out of the home—is there something, too, in the fact that the father's role has changed?

DR. HOLLINGSHEAD. I think there is something to be said for that point of view, but we also have to realize that the role of the woman in our society is changing. There are many problems associated with the changing sex role of women which creates problems for females as well as for males. For example, the little girl who is trained for a certain function in a home; later she is expected to go on the production line of a factory, be a clerk in an office; still later she is expected to be a homemaker, mother, housewife. This confusion in the culture leads, perhaps, to ambiguity in role identification and problems for the maturing youngster.

DR. RICHMOND. I would just like to raise a question for Dr. Hollingshead. I think there has been the implication in some of the discussion, at least, that we are prolonging adolescence and the period of dependency of our youngsters. Although this may be true in some ways, I think that our youngsters are not running true to form in this connection. If we take the lowering age at the time of marriage and the lowered childbearing age as an example, this is not necessarily true. Many parents today are perturbed about the fact that their children are marrying and assuming family responsibilities at a time when they really have not yet emerged from adolescence. Certainly, economic opportunities of various kinds, including the G.I. Bill, have made it possible for youngsters to do this.

It does raise the question, too, of what happens to adolescents who themselves are parents, because, as we have encountered many of our young mothers and fathers in our clinical settings, it is pretty obvious to us that they, indeed, are in a period of adolescence and have much growing up to do.

I just wonder if you would comment on some of this problem we are encountering clinically. We are not fully aware, really, of how the sociologists view these trends.

DR. HOLLINGSHEAD. In answer to Dr. Richmond's first point, it was Dr. Psathas who emphasized the lengthening adolescence, and not Hollingshead.

DR. RICHMOND. I said, "in the discussion."

DR. HOLLINGSHEAD. I think, certainly, in the job area we are doing this. We are raising the school-leaving age. In the last half century it has been raised at least two years and, in some states, four years.

Then, both the craft unions and the industrial unions put floors under the age when a person can become an apprentice or a member of the union. This is producing a period of three, four or five years between the time when the youngster is able to do a job and when he is allowed by society to do the job.

You are certainly right about the trend of marriage being toward younger ages. The age of marriage has been going down in the United States since, roughly, 1890. During this period we have, particularly since the outbreak of World War I, cut down on immigration to this country. Many of the immigrants who came in the previous period were single. They worked two, three, four, five, six years before they married or sent back to Europe for a bride.

A considerable number of young people are mating with or without legal sanctions. In many clinics and urban centers this is the kind of

person encountered. The young person has taken on an adult sex role, and pregnancy has resulted; possibly it has resulted in marriage. A series of emotional, economic and family problems follows. We see only one aspect of this in the clinic.

In the New Haven community, from 1948 through 1950, over 7000 couples were married. We found that 40 per cent of the girls, in the lowest socio-economic class, were pregnant at the time of marriage. Dr. Dougald Beard and his research unit in obstetrical medicine in Aberdeen also found that around 40 per cent of the girls in class V were pregnant at the time of marriage.

The age of marriage is significantly lower among females, as well as males, in this age group than in the higher socio-economic groups.

Social position, as well as role sanction at a particular social level, has to be taken into consideration when one discusses these things.

DR. SOLNIT. Would you comment on the idea that the type of education the physician receives makes it difficult for him to understand and communicate with adolescent patients.

DR. HOLLINGSHEAD. It all depends on the social class of his patients and the social class from which the physician came. Dr. Solnit, have you read Chapter 5 of *Social Class and Mental Illness?* There is an answer there for the psychiatrist.

DR. SOLNIT. I was thinking of the pediatrician, for whom the problem is differently framed for the adolescent patient.

DR. HOLLINGSHEAD. Here again it will depend upon the social background of the pediatrician and the social composition of his patients.

I hope Dr. Gray does not throw an ashtray at me. During the coffee break he was concerned with juvenile delinqency. Some of the speakers had indicated there is a considerable amount in our society. He did not think there was as much as this morning's speakers indicated because, as he put it, he did not see this in the adolescents he treats. I would not expect this amount of delinquency in the patient load he is treating.

Again, do not throw that ashtray, Dr. Gray. Yesterday afternoon, when Dr. Gray was talking, I was struck by the, perhaps, unconscious social identifications that he was making of his neighbors and of his patients, all high-status people. I did not hear him make a single identification that indicated any of his patients came from lower-status groups.

DR. GRAY. They don't.